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INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

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COUNTRY French West Africa

DATE DISTR. 23 MAY 1949

SUBJECT Activities of the Rassemblement
Démocratique Africain
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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

1. Source said that there has been considerable reaction in French West Africa against the arbitrary and aggressive methods used by the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA) and, while he did not know to what extent the RDA could be said to have lost influence, he stated that, if this were the case, it was due to the strong policy and toughness of Governor General Bechard.* The aggressive activities of the RDA in the Ivory Coast have taken the form of the advocacy of non-payment of taxes and other incitements of that order. These activities have been stopped by official action, on order from the Governor General.
2. The RDA wants to achieve social improvements and equal rights within the French Union, and source emphasized that the movement is of an "emancipatory" nature and that its members are against any subservience to Moscow or to any other foreign authority. As regards social questions, there is a strong similarity between the views and strivings of the RDA and Communism, but, in its present stage, the RDA is concerned with the attainment of these social goals, and not with politics in the sense of implementing Communist Party injunctions. However, the RDA does operate a cadre school in the Ivory Coast where, according to source, the teaching is "communistic," if not actually communist.
3. Source stated that the white troops in the area are "all right," in so far as Communism itself is concerned, but that they will continue to be carefully watched in this respect. The black troops require careful watching, although there is no evidence of Communist influence per se, most of them adhering to the RDA.
4. Pierre Herve, chief editor of the communist paper, L'Humanité, recently made a trip to Dakar and was disappointed by the response to his efforts, source stated.

25X1A6a

Comment. General Bechard is now High Commissioner and Governor General of French West Africa and has the added responsibility of coordinating all military activities and defense measures in French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa.

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NO CHANGE in Class. ☐☒ DECLASSIFIED

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